

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 /014 W

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P 122125Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1977

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, VE

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECTS - VENEZUELAN RAILROAD

REF: RULPSEL 1541, R 310043Z JAN 76, RULPSEL 1571, R 311829Z

JAN 76

1. COMMERCIAL OFFICER DISCUSSED ASSERTIONS, MADE BY LOCAL PRESS AND ATTRIBUTED TO PRESIDENT PEREZ AND PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU OF CANADA, THAT CANADA HAD PRIME CHANCE OF OBTAINING VENEZUELAN RAILROAD PROJECT WITH DR. ROBERTO AGOSTINI, PRESIDENT OF INSTITUTO FERROCARRILES DEL ESTADO. DR. AGOSTINI REAFFIRMED THAT NO COUNTRY, NO FIRM HAS ANY SPECIAL ADVANTAGE IN OBTAINING RAILROAD PROJECT AT THIS TIME.

2. DR. AGOSTINI SAID THAT FOLLOWING PRESS REPORTS (REFTELS), BRITISH AMBASSADOR HAD CALLED ON MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ASSURED THAT FAIR BIDDING PRACTICES WERE BEING FOLLOWED. ACCORDING TO AGOSTINI BRITISH HAVE VERY HIGH HOPES OF OBTAINING PROJECT. FRENCH, AGAIN ACCORDING TO AGOSTINI, SAY THEY WILL WIN THE CONTRACT "AS A POINT OF HONOR", WHILE JAPANESE HAVE MAINTAINED LARGE DELEGATION OF RAILROAD EXPERTS IN CARACAS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. AGOSTINI COMPLAINED THEY ARE PESTERING HIM AND HE HAS LIMITED RECEIVING VISITORS IN HIS OFFICE TO ONE MORNING PER WEEK.

3. AGOSTINI SAID HE HAS HIGH HOPES THAT AMERICAN FIRMS WILL BID ON PROJECT. COMMERCIAL ATTACHE ASKED WHAT EFFECT GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BIDDING (FROM BRITAIN, FRANCE AND POSSIBLY OTHERS)

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WILL HAVE ON COMPETITIVE POSITION OF U.S. PRIVATE FIRMS.

AGOSTINI REPLIED THAT THIS WAS SIMPLY A MANIFESTATION OF U.S. ECONOMIC POWER IN THAT SINGLE U.S. FIRMS WERE LARGE ENOUGH TO TAKE ON TASK WHICH REQUIRED GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION BY OTHER NATIONS ENTERING CONTEST.

ACTION FOR COMMERCE

4. EMBASSY MUST RECEIVE NAMES OF U.S. FIRMS WISHING TO PRE-QUALIFY FOR PROJECT BY FEB. 18 IN ORDER TO PRESENT FORMAL LETTER INCORPORATING NAMES OF ALL U.S. ENTITIES BY FEB. 20 DEADLINE ANNOUNCED IN PRELIMINARY BIDDING DOCUMENTS.
SHLAUDEMAM

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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